

GrapeSEED is Changing Lives



Middlebury Community Schools are Making it Happen!



WE ARE located in northern Indiana in Elkhart County and have a student population of approximately 4,500 students in K-12. Approximately 32% of our students qualify for the free/reduced lunch program. Jefferson Elementary, one of our K-3 schools, has 40% of the students qualifying for free/reduced lunches.

OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES are very supportive of Jefferson and love learning together. 18 % of our students are language minority representing Spanish, Pennsylvania Dutch, Russian and Ukrainian native speakers.

OUR TEACHERS in Title I have been trained in the balanced literacy framework and receive continual professional development in working with non-English speaking children. They also have experience teaching kindergarten and Reading Recovery.

OUR PROMISING PRACTICE GrapeSEED is an oral language acquisition and critical listening program development through songs, chants, music, pictures and stories. Literacy is improved for students including LEP students and struggling readers. Standard English is developed in a way that closely mimics the way children naturally learn their language. Non-native English speaking students reached reading proficiency in half the time of the national average.

OUR STEPS

We investigated the GrapeSEED program to support the oral language development with non-native English speaking students and students of poverty. We also explored research regarding growth in reading with these two subgroups of students. Our Assistant Superintendent, EL Coordinator, Title I Program Administrator and Elementary Literacy Coach gathered information and spoke to implementing schools regarding program effectiveness. Jefferson Elementary School decided to purchase student licenses and implement with kindergarteners. Title I funded instructors are implementing GrapeSEED. The student engagement is fueling the desire for learning and for the enjoyable practicing of what they learn.

IN OUR OWN WORDS... "I have watched students begin GrapeSEED as reluctant learners and participants and end with a voice and confidence to become active learners for the first time. When beginning GrapeSEED, I remember watching some of my little learners quietly observing but not having the confidence to join in. Now those same little learners are the ones with their hands raised high and becoming the leaders of the group. It is so evident to see the pride they have with being able to confidently participate and be active learners for the first time in the classroom." – Amy Ciokajlo